

## 8 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This section of the report begins with an overview of the development program for the entire corridor followed by a review of recommendations for each of the four districts and a summary of the corridor-wide recommendations. The development program overview provides a summary of proposed uses as they relate to the findings of the market analyses and retail audit. The recommendations for the four districts focus on land use, preservation, design quality, and development strategies for specific blocks and sites. The corridor-wide recommendations focus on streetscape and public space improvements, traffic and transit improvements, and programs and initiatives to support existing businesses, attract new investment, and ensure neighborhood compatibility.

### 8.1 Development Program Overview

The development program for the corridor provides ten year planning targets for land uses. The program builds on the results of the market analyses and retail audit and is shaped by the community's goals for new uses, the preservation of existing buildings, and ideas for new development.

As provided in the market analysis, demand over a ten year period could support approximately 1.24 million square feet of development, approximately half of which would be used for apartment units in new buildings or in the uppers floors of existing buildings.

*(Note: The corridor currently has approximately 1.22 million square feet of occupied gross floor area, including 138,977 sf under Exempt, e.g. Government, Institutional, etc. uses.)*

#### Market Demand Projection to 2012

Use	Building Area (sf)	Current Occupied Area (sf)
Retail Uses	300,000	431,150
Office	200,000	538,931
Apartments	650,000*	106,673 (all Residential use)
Condominium Units	100,000*	(combined with above)
Total 2012 Demand	1,250,000	

*\*Building area required for apartments and condominium units is based on an average unit size of 1,000 square feet.*

Meeting this demand along H Street over the next 10 years will result in significant new investment in a mix of renovation and new building projects.

The Plan, as presented in the following pages, identifies opportunities for new development on vacant parcels and the preservation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. In total, the plan identifies opportunities for the addition of between 800,000-900,000 square feet of building space for a total of potentially some 2.2 million square feet of space along the entire corridor.

*(Note: This amount projects the needs for the corridor, and may be built up incrementally, beyond the ten year horizon.)*

As indicated in the plan, the proposed new development is generally divided between new, larger-scale projects on vacant or underutilized sites at the western end of the corridor and small scale, infill development projects scattered along the entire corridor.

While the total potential building area illustrated in the Plan is substantially higher than what is called for in the market analysis, the Plan must provide for an adequate range of development opportunities to accommodate shifts in market demand and provide flexibility to potential developers and investors. Another reason for the gap between the demand numbers and the potential building area illustrated in the Plan relates to the timing of projects. Some projects, including many of the small scale, infill projects, are expected to develop over a 20 year; rather than 10 year; time period.

The Plan also calls for the replacement of several existing buildings with new buildings. These recommendations for redevelopment fall into two general categories:

- replacement of buildings on underutilized sites scattered along the entire corridor; and
- replacement of buildings to accommodate larger-scale redevelopment projects.

The first type of redevelopment—replacement of buildings on underutilized sites—builds on the assumption that over the next twenty years, most of the existing 1 story buildings (virtually all of which were built in the past 35 years and are not considered historically significant) will be replaced with 3-4 story buildings. The second type, related to larger scale redevelopment projects, will result in the removal of a few existing, non-historic buildings including the mid to late 20th century additions to the Children's Museum, the Murry's building (to be replaced with a larger grocery and related retail uses), and the Auto Zone store. It's important to note the plan proposes that only 14% of the total building area along the corridor be removed to accommodate new development, and that this redevelopment is expected to occur gradually over a ten to twenty year period.

The Study encourages land assemblage on all the parcels along the corridor where new construction has been proposed, indicated as orange developments in the illustrated Plan.

Overall Development Program Summary

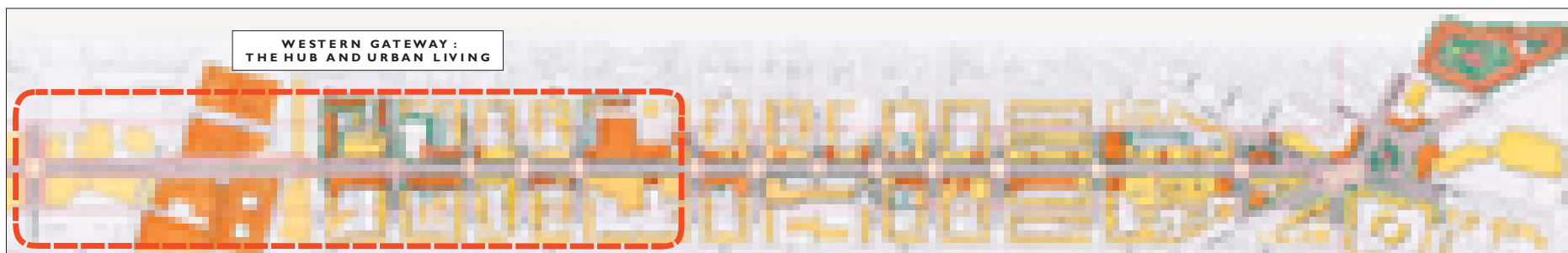
District	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Western Gateway	688,000	83,000	458,000	1,063,000
Central Retail	303,000	81,000	178,000*	400,000
Arts & Entertainment	299,000	42,000	166,000	423,000
The Mall	214,000	0	71,000**	285,000
Total	1,504,000	206,000	873,000	2,171,000

\* The estimate of new building area for the Central Retail District does not assume redevelopment of the H Street Connection.

\*\* The estimate of new building area for the Hechinger/Former Sears District assumes the Former Sears site is developed with 45,000 square feet of retail use.

## 8.2 Strategic Development Plan by District

The following section of the Plan provides a summary of recommendations for each of the districts along the H Street corridor. For each district, the Plan's general intent is restated, the development program is presented, and specific projects and initiatives are described.



## Western Gateway: The Hub and Urban Living (North Capitol Street to 7th Street)

### Overall Development Program Summary

District	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Western Gateway	688,000	83,000	458,000	1,063,000
Central Retail	303,000	81,000	178,000*	400,000
Arts & Entertainment	299,000	42,000	166,000	423,000
The Mall	214,000	0	71,000**	285,000
Total	1,504,000	206,000	873,000	2,171,000

\*The estimate of new building area for the Central Retail District does not assume redevelopment of the H Street Connection.

\*\*The estimate of new building area for the Hechinger/Former Sears District assumes the Former Sears site is developed with 45,000 square feet of retail use.

### Western Gateway Development Program Summary

Use	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Retail	47,994	23,489	56,660	81,165
Office/Commercial	414,122	29,188	100,810	485,744
Residential	86,665	633	409,557	495,589
Exempt	138,977	30,000	-108,977	0
Total (approx.)	688,000	83,000	458,000	1,063,000

### Introduction

The Western Gateway, extending from North Capitol Street to 7th Street, serves as the literal and symbolic bridge between H Street, North Capitol Street, Union Station, and destinations throughout the core of the City. Walking distance from Union Station played a strong role in defining the limits of the district—the entire area is within a 10-12 minute walk of a Metro station, making development and adaptive reuse projects particularly attractive to residents, retailers and office tenants seeking to benefit from regional transit accessibility. Planned developments at Station Place and the Union Station Air-Rights site and the concentration of vacant sites and buildings further contribute to the district's potential.

With proper planning, new buildings along the Hopscotch Bridge and between 2nd and 4th Streets can bring new life to this end of the corridor. With entries directly on the bridge, active storefronts, pedestrian amenities, and improved access to Union Station, the Hopscotch Bridge can become an attractive extension of the corridor and a critical link to new uses. Larger sites in single ownership make higher density, mixed-use projects possible and allow a sensitive transition from Station Place and the Air Rights development to lower scale buildings between 4th and 7th Streets. Mixed-use development at this end of the corridor reinforces the concept of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), the District's policy of focusing mixed-use activity nodes close to major transportation hubs.

### Development Program

The Plan estimates the Western Gateway can support, over the next 10 years, the following:

- 500,000 to 600,000 square feet (or 500-600 units) of housing;
- 5,000 to 15,000 square feet of retail space; and
- 100,000 square feet of Class B office space

Accommodating these uses and maximizing the development potential of vacant and underutilized sites would result in the removal of approximately 83,000 square feet of building area and the addition of 458,000 square feet for a total potential building area of 1,063,000 square feet. Under the Plan, new development is focused on the 300 and 400 blocks of H Street. Buildings to be removed include most of the remaining buildings on the 300 block, the most recent additions to the Children's Museum, and the Murry's Grocery Store building.

The development program for this district is heavily focused on residential use. A concentration of housing at the western end of H Street will have a beneficial impact on the viability of small retail establishments, such as traditional 'corner shops.' While Station Place and the Air Rights project are adjacent to the corridor, it is anticipated that these will have limited impact on H Street retail, as their primary retail focus will be toward Union Station. As with all office workers, the retail needs generated by these types of development will be predominantly food, and namely 'quick bite' food, which will be satisfied by their internal cafeteria and the offerings at Union Station. Additional 'spill over' onto H Street is possible, but should not

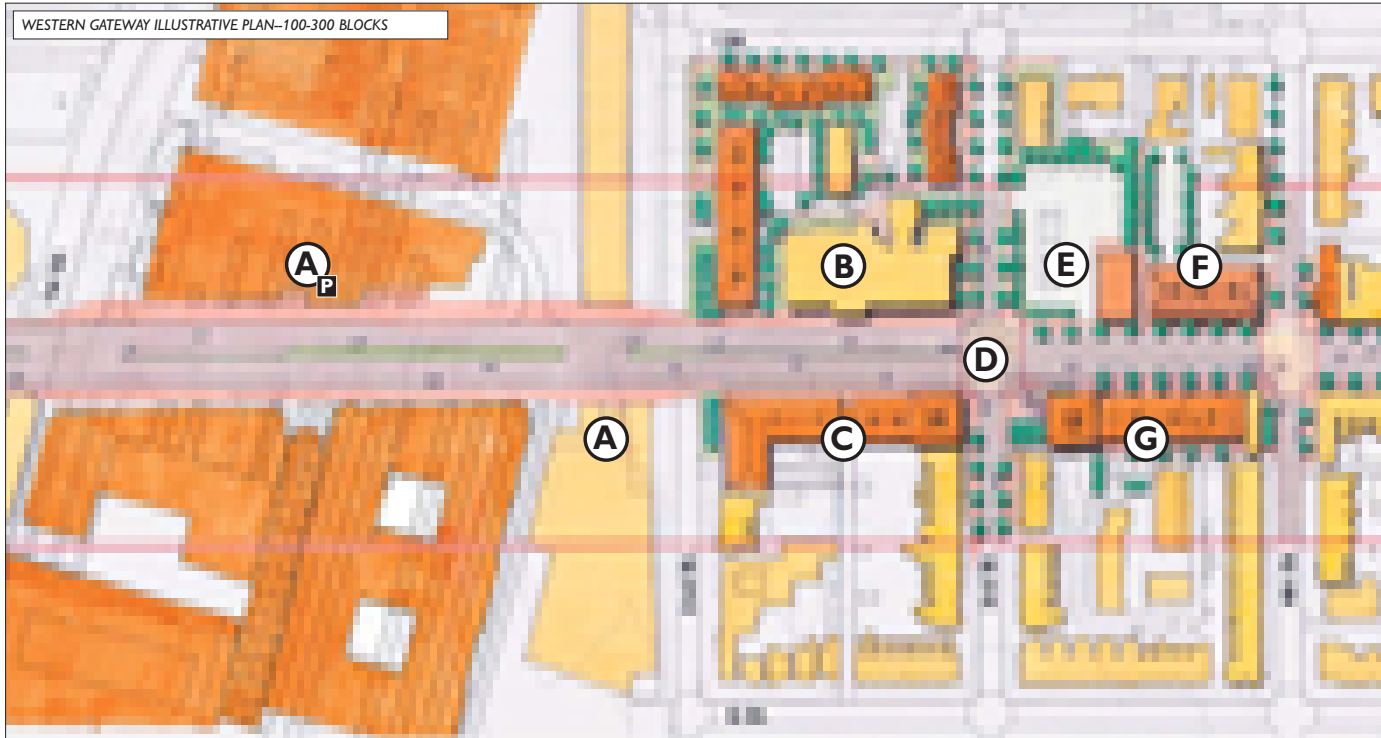
be counted on, and these needs will be met in the Central Retail District or the small corner retailers that have been accounted for in this district.

### Recommendations

**Air Rights and Station Place (A).** The District and community stakeholders should continue to work with the developers of these significant projects to ensure they contribute to the creation of a quality pedestrian environment along the Hopscotch Bridge. This includes, but is not limited to, the provision of convenient, safe and clearly-marked connections to Union Station; the provision of streetscape amenities such as sufficient lighting, signage, hardscaping and other street furniture; and the disposition of the proposed developments so that they engage the street at pedestrian level. New buildings should have H Street addresses with primary entries opening directly on the bridge sidewalk or onto entry courts with direct connections to the bridge. New buildings should directly abut the bridge structure with no rails or fencing between the sidewalk and the building facades. To the greatest extent possible, the bridge should appear to be an extension of the H Street streetscape.

**Capital Children's Museum Site—100 Block Northside (B).** The District should encourage the redevelopment of Capital Children's Museum (CCM) site, with rehabilitation of existing CCM and additional residential development of residential units at the east, north and west sides of the block, in the form of townhouses and multi-family buildings. CCM's possible relocation makes this a key development site, as this

WESTERN GATEWAY ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN—100-300 BLOCKS



is the only block controlled by a single entity. The complex's probable historical importance suggests adaptive reuse of Capital Children's Museum buildings, most likely for residential use. Parking for the redevelopment can be accommodated underground at the west edge of the site, as the grade slopes down toward the rail lines.

It must be noted that a cultural facility along the corridor represents a significant and important civic entity — separate from private development and capable of offering a fully supportive infrastructure. Without the CCM facility, H Street may be losing a civic opportunity, but the continued accommodation toward projects of its type must be encouraged to fulfill the role of a complete neighborhood. Alternatively, the possible expansion of the current facility to a National Children's Museum would be best explored and developed as a design

competition. In this event, the program and criteria for the competition should be developed by the District and/or CMM as a separate undertaking.

#### Western Gateway Site—200 Block Southside (C).

The Plan calls for the assembly of several lots and their development to a mid-rise (6-8 story) building to accommodate mixed income residential and/or office uses with a retail or restaurant use at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and H Streets. The building should be built to the property line on H Street, with the mass of the building placed as far to the north of the site as possible. Parking should be provided underground with the primary vehicular access off 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. The design of the building should reinforce the importance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and H Street intersection as the corridor's western gateway.

Currently, Potomac Development Corporation owns this site and had architectural drawings prepared for a mixed-use development, with residential, office and retail components. Station Place developers are interested in area housing opportunities for the employees of the Securities Exchange Commission and other future tenants.

#### Gateway Public Space— Intersection and Corner of H and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets (D).

The intersection of H and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets is proposed to have special hardscaping/paving distinguishing it from the other intersections along the corridor and marking it as the transition from the Hopscotch Bridge/Union Station area into the corridor proper.

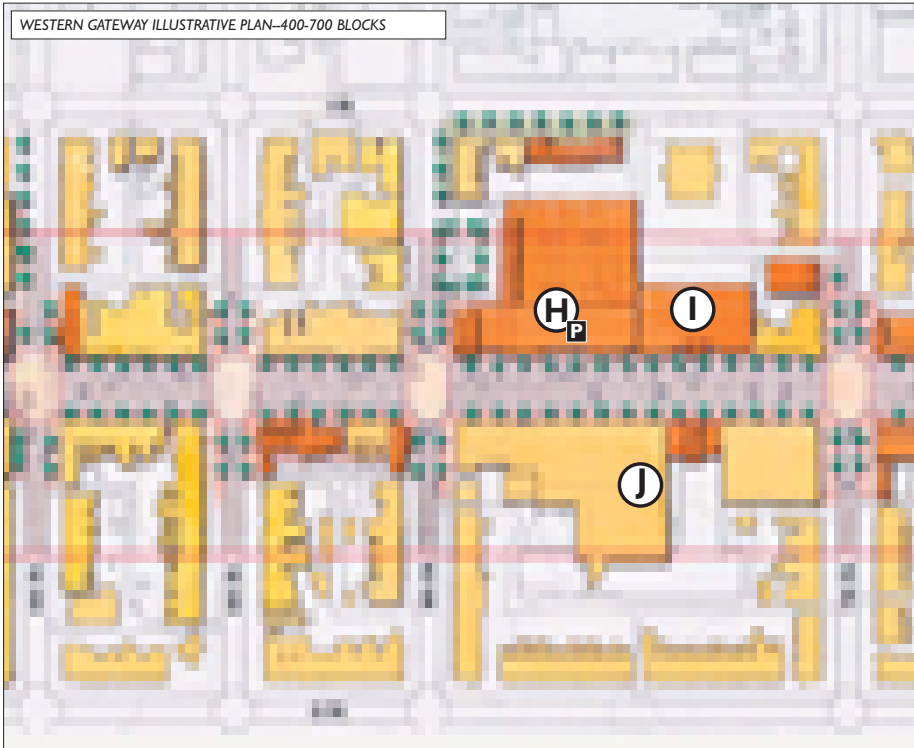
New development on the east side of the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and H Street should also contribute to the creation of this space. A small public space fronting the intersection on the southeast corner is envisioned to form, with the hardscaped intersection, a larger symbolic place, a civic plaza welcoming people to the corridor and marking the western end of the corridor. The corner public space also becomes an informal neighborhood gathering space animated by shops and cafes. The current scheme for the BP/Amoco site does not depict a public space at the northeast corner. Nonetheless, it is anticipated that the revised scheme for the BP/Amoco site or an alternative development proposal, as described in the following subsection, will be able address this intent, accommodate a public space at the northeast corner and complete the formal gateway public space.

**BP/Amoco Site—West of Alley (E).** The District and community stakeholders will continue their work with the representatives of BP/Amoco to develop the best possible design for a new gas station and convenience store on the existing gas station site (*Note: They are anticipated to re-submit their zoning application in early 2003.*).

While a service station may provide a needed service and tax revenues, it does not represent the optimal land use and building type at this location. An alternative might include a 6-8 story residential building to match the scale of proposed development on the south side of H Street. The introduction of new households at this location could have a positive impact on H Street's business development efforts.

**BP/Amoco Site—East of Alley (F).** At this location, the Plan calls for the development of a 3-5 story building designed for retail on the ground floor and residential and/or office uses on upper floors. The new building should be pulled forward to define the street edge, and incorporate some architectural treatment recognizing its position on a corner. Parking should

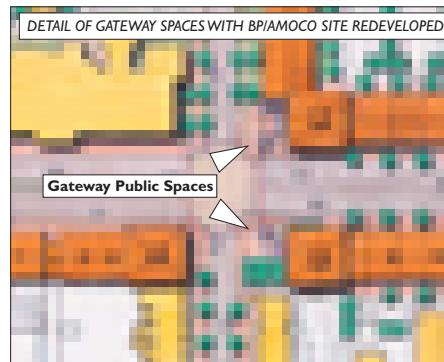
WESTERN GATEWAY ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN—400-700 BLOCKS



be provided underground and to the rear of the building with access off the alley. While ground floor retail uses may not be possible in the near term, the new building should be designed to accommodate retail or restaurant uses in the future.

**300 Block Southside (G).** Like the block immediately to the west, the Plan calls for the assembly of several lots along H Street and their development to a single 6-8 story building with residential or office as the primary use and retail uses on the H Street frontage and at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and H Street. The new building should be built to the property line on H Street, defining the street edge/public realm. A small public space at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and H Street forms part of the civic space marking the western gateway. Parking should be provided underground with access from 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Streets rather than H Street.

DETAIL OF GATEWAY SPACES WITH BP/AMOCO SITE REDEVELOPED



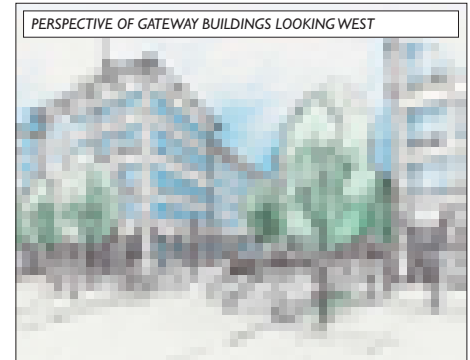
Currently, a local developer has preliminary plans for a mixed-use project on the entire block frontage. The developer is currently seeking a larger partner in order to move the project forward. The developer is also an area stakeholder and is committed to the appropriate design character and use for this strategic site.

#### Preservation, Adaptive Reuse and Infill Development.

The remaining blocks are appropriate for preservation, adaptive reuse and selective redevelopment/infill development. For the largest of the redevelopment sites, currently home to the H Street CDC, the Plan calls for the removal of the existing one-story office building and the development of a new 3-4 story building with storefronts along H Street, residential or office uses on the upper floors and parking off the alley. While ground floor retail uses may not be possible in the near term given market constraints, the new building should be designed to accommodate retail or restaurant uses in the future.

- **Murry's Site Redevelopment (H)** - The Plan recommends the Murry's site and parking lot be redeveloped to create a new mixed use project incorporating residential and/or office uses, an urban grocery store and a parking structure designed to serve the development as well as provide public parking for the corridor. It is estimated that a new development could accommodate 300-350 parking spaces in a mid-block structure. Redevelopment plans should include an analysis of the Blaire School's historic significance and adaptive reuse potential. The project should result in the creation of new storefronts along H Street.
- **Loft Housing Adaptive Reuse (I)** - The redevelopment of the storage facility for loft-style apartments/condominium

PERSPECTIVE OF GATEWAY BUILDINGS LOOKING WEST



units should be explored as part of the redevelopment plans for the Murry's site. While this proposal requires additional study, transformation of the current structure (formerly the Ourisman Chevrolet showroom) into a stylish loft apartment building could serve as a catalyst for similar conversions along the corridor. This effort could be combined with the Murry's/Blaine School strategy, making the overall scenario more attractive to the development community.

#### Activation of the DOES/DHS Ground Floor (J)

- The plan includes a proposal for infill development at the wide entrance to the DOES building parking lot along with improvements to the ground floor of the DOES building. Opportunities exist to create a continuous street wall by bridging over the entrance to the parking lot and bringing more active uses to the H Street frontage of the building.

The DOES is a temporary use occupying the building's ground floor. The space offers a great development opportunity for some other appropriate ground level use, e.g. retail, once it vacated in 2005. However, should ground floor retail prove infeasible (this area is not identified as a priority site for retail development) the building owners should explore possibility of removing visual barriers along the street edge and letting passersby see into the building.

As part of the planning process, a redevelopment alternative was prepared for the site. The alternative called for a large-scale housing development on the site. If realized, the additional residential population generated would complement the proposed redevelopment of the Murry's site and provide additional customers for the proposed Central Retail District.



### Central Retail District (7th Street to 12th Street)

#### Overall Development Program Summary

District	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Western Gateway	688,000	83,000	458,000	1,063,000
Central Retail	303,000	81,000	178,000*	400,000
Arts & Entertainment	299,000	42,000	166,000	423,000
The Mall	214,000	0	71,000**	285,000
Total	1,504,000	206,000	873,000	2,171,000

\*The estimate of new building area for the Central Retail District does not assume redevelopment of the H Street Connection.

\*\*The estimate of new building area for the Hechinger/Former Sears District assumes the Former Sears site is developed with 45,000 square feet of retail use.

#### Central Retail District Development Program Summary

Use	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Retail	160,863	53,717	61,275	168,421
Office/Commercial	78,100	20,797	35,145	92,448
Residential	64,257	7,368	82,005	138,894
Total (approx.)	303,000	81,000	178,000	400,000

#### Introduction

Plans for the Central Retail District recognize this area's long history as the neighborhood's primary shopping destination. The area around the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> and H Streets continues to benefit from its position as the corridor's '100% corner'—the place where the transportation network best supports retail activity. Several transportation-related factors—the crossing of high volume bus lines, the passing of 24,000 vehicles per day, and foot traffic from the neighborhood—make this area attractive to a mix of local, regional, and national retailers. Recent building renovations and the low number vacant sites and storefronts are clear signs of the area's viability as a retail destination.

Recommendations for the Central Retail District focus on leveraging existing assets—strong existing businesses, quality building stock, and excellent accessibility. Recommendations include initiatives to increase the competitiveness of existing businesses, attract new investment, encourage the renovation of storefronts and buildings, attract small office and apartment uses in upper story spaces, and encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized sites. Full-time on-street parking along with proposed public parking facilities at the district's edges—at the redeveloped Murry's site and at the Auto Zone site—will help support the district's development.

#### Development Program

The Plan estimates the Central Retail District can support, over the next 10 years, the following:

- 120,000 to 200,000 square feet of retail uses;
- 100,000 square feet (or 100 units) of housing; and
- 50,000 square feet of square feet of office space

Accommodating these uses and maximizing the development potential of vacant and underutilized sites will result in the removal of approximately 81,000 square feet of building area and the addition of 178,000 square feet for a total building area of 400,000 square feet. Development in this area will result in the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings and redevelopment resulting in the replacement of several single story buildings with new 3-4 story buildings.

The development program is heavily focused on retail uses. By focusing future retail development in this District, both existing and new merchants will benefit from cross-shopping—customers patronizing another establishment than the focus of their original trip—and the creation of a strong identity for the district. The types of retail that fit into this merchandising mix would be bakery, dry cleaner, party supplier, tailor, florist, beauty salon, barber, convenience store, deli, newsstand, small family restaurants, coffee shop, and any

other type of shop that benefits from a dense, residential clientele of approximately 30,000 people.

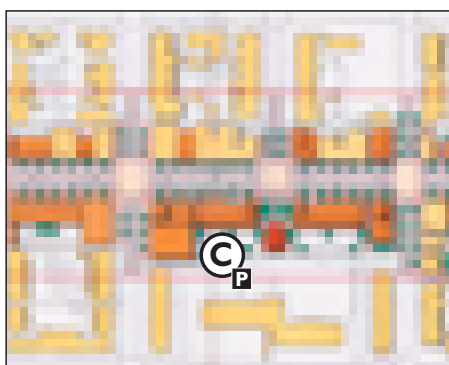
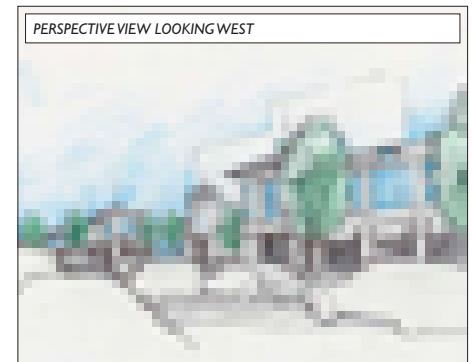
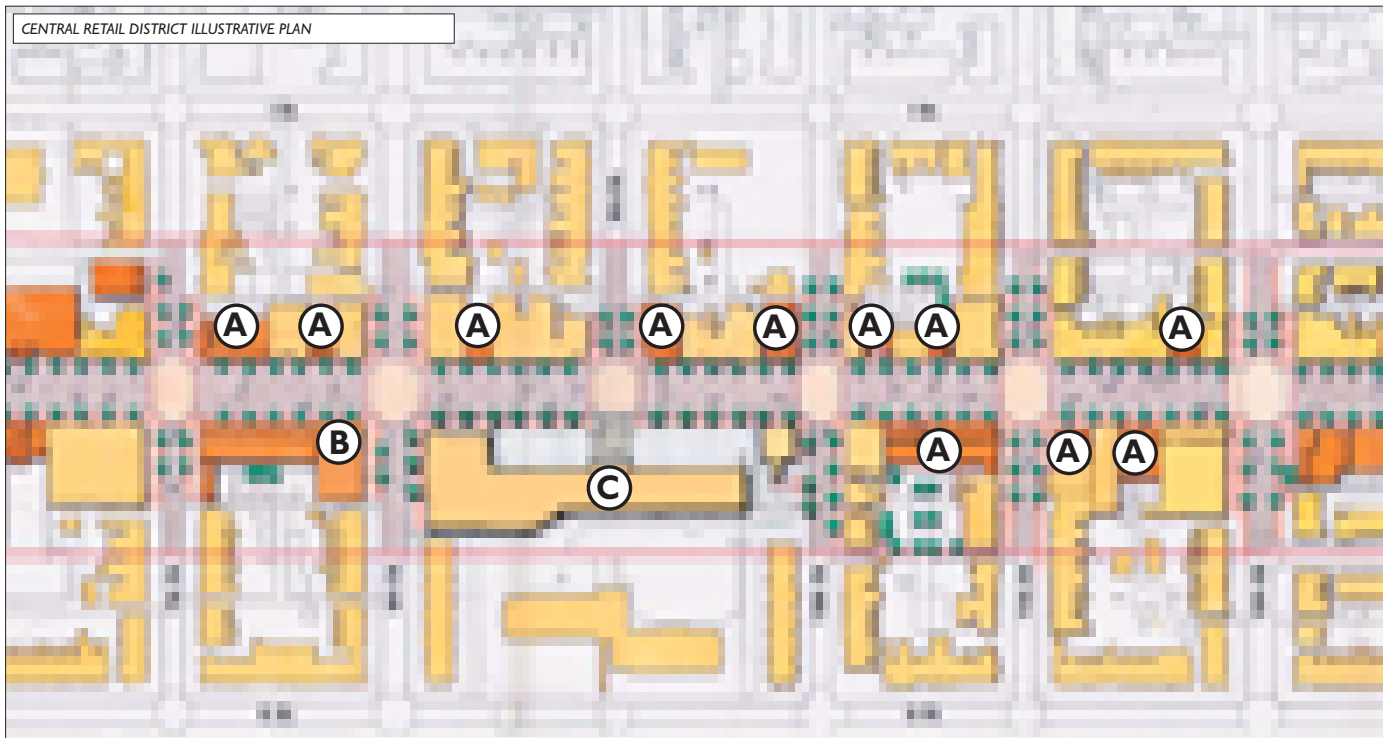
Concentrating retail investment and activity is designed to address several key obstacles:

- the isolation of retailers along the H Street corridor;
- the inability of market demand to support retail along the entire corridor; and
- negative perception caused by the proliferation of vacant storefronts.

#### Recommendations

**Preservation, Adaptive Reuse and Infill Development (A).** Several sites have been identified as appropriate for small scale redevelopment and infill development. These sites offer opportunities for owners of small vacant and underutilized sites opportunities to contribute to the revitalization effort while maintaining the scale and character of the corridor.

**8<sup>th</sup> and H Infill (B).** Development at 8<sup>th</sup> and H is currently permitted as a one-story retail building. The design team proposes the addition of a real second-floor – one that could include either office space or a civic use. In any case, it is vital for this location to be occupied by a 2 or 3 story building that properly responds to the corner



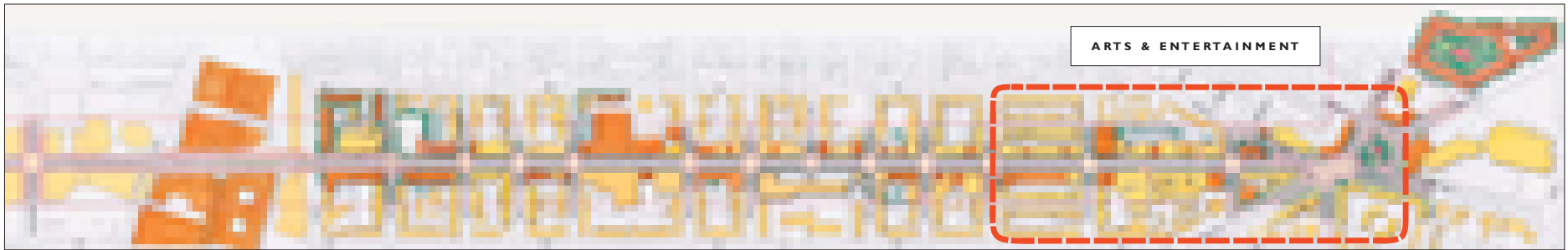
location. A 1-story building will simply not create a strong development edge at this important intersection as well as a 2 or 3-story building.

**H Street Connection (C).** Simple, short-term improvements, such as better landscaping, lighting and signage are recommended to create a better image for the center. To better use the Connection's parking during evening hours, shared parking agreements between the center and the theaters should be explored.

In the long term, the site's redevelopment is recommended. To maximize the site's development potential and to bring more activity to the street, the Plan recommends

replacement of the existing buildings with a more urban, mixed use development composed of 3-4 story buildings with retail on the ground floor; residences and offices in upper story spaces, and rear yard parking or underground parking. The new buildings should be built at the street edge. The redevelopment alternative also includes an opportunity for a new civic building and small public square on the center of the site.

**Corner Lots.** Corner lots in this district present unique opportunities to enliven the street and create stronger connections between the corridor and the surrounding neighborhood. The wide sidewalks on many of the side streets, e.g. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street, present great opportunities for the development of sidewalk cafes, outdoor displays of merchandise, small garden spaces, and other uses that take advantage of the wide right-of-way.



## Arts & Entertainment (12th Street to Bladensburg Avenue)

### Introduction

Building on the success of the H Street Playhouse, the presence of the R. L. Christian Library, plans for the Atlas Performing Arts Center's rebirth, and the area's historic buildings, the Plan envisions the eastern end of the corridor developing as a destination for restaurants, cafes, galleries, small shops, and studio spaces serving the needs of theatergoers, the District arts community, and neighborhood residents. Extending from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Bladensburg Road, this area will act as a magnet for arts and entertainment-related investments and a catalyst for the celebration of local heritage and culture. Improved library facilities are expected to play an important role in the area's future — a greatly improved facility could provide a civic presence and an important educational and cultural anchor for neighborhood residents, especially children. The plan also calls for the redesign of the intersection of H and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets with Florida, Maryland, Bladensburg, and Benning Avenues to improve conditions for pedestrians, calm traffic, and create a new space for a memorial or public art.

This area, in combination with the Central Retail District, will further improve the street's image as a unique and interesting destination. Recommendations for this area include initiatives to attract new investment, encourage the renovation of storefronts and buildings, attract small office and apartment uses in upper story spaces, encourage infill development on vacant and underutilized sites, and increase the availability of parking.

### Development Program

The Plan estimates the Arts & Entertainment District can support, over the next 10 years, the following:

- 15,000 – 40,000 square feet of retail uses;
- 100,000 square feet (or 100 units) of housing; and
- 50,000 square feet of office space.

Accommodating these uses and maximizing the development potential of vacant and underutilized sites will result in the removal of approximately 42,000 square feet of building area and the addition of 166,000 square feet for a total building area of 423,000 square feet. Development in this area will result in the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of buildings and redevelopment resulting in the replacement of several single story buildings with new 3-4 story buildings. The Plan also calls for the development of public parking to serve this area and the Central Retail District.

This development program for retail use is built on the assumption that the Atlas Performing Arts Center, along with the already thriving H Street Playhouse, will become strong arts and entertainment magnets and spark demand for restaurants and neighborhood cafes.

This area in combination with the focused Central Retail District would further support the street's image as a unique and interesting place to investigate and patronize. The success of this district could result in an expanded trade area, which would translate into healthier H Street retail establishments.

### Recommendations

**Auto Zone Site Redevelopment (A).** The Plan identified the Auto Zone site as an appropriate location for the development of a 3-4 level parking structure with ground floor retail fronting H Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets. The current condition of the site does not contribute to the pedestrian character of H Street. The buildings blank walls and auto-centric parking configuration make this site a good example of development that should not be repeated along the corridor. The redevelopment of the parcel could provide an opportunity for structured parking in a location that provides support for the arts and entertainment and other supporting uses. Although parking is recommended in this location, a mixed-use structure which combines, retail, residential and/or office would be allowed if parking proves to be infeasible.

**R. L. Christian Library Site (B).** The District recently initiated a process to evaluate R. L. Christian Library's programs and facilities and determine alternatives for providing better services to the community. The process will result in recommendations for improvements to the existing facility, replacement of the facility on the existing site and a new building. The Plan fully recognizes the library's important role in the neighborhood's future and strongly supports its continued presence in the center or eastern end of the corridor.

Short term improvements to the site could include the development of a small (15-20 space) public parking lot behind the library, with appropriate lighting, screening, and

### Overall Development Program Summary

District	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Western Gateway	688,000	83,000	458,000	1,063,000
Central Retail	303,000	81,000	178,000*	400,000
Arts & Entertainment	299,000	42,000	166,000	423,000
The Mall	214,000	0	71,000**	285,000
Total	1,504,000	206,000	873,000	2,171,000

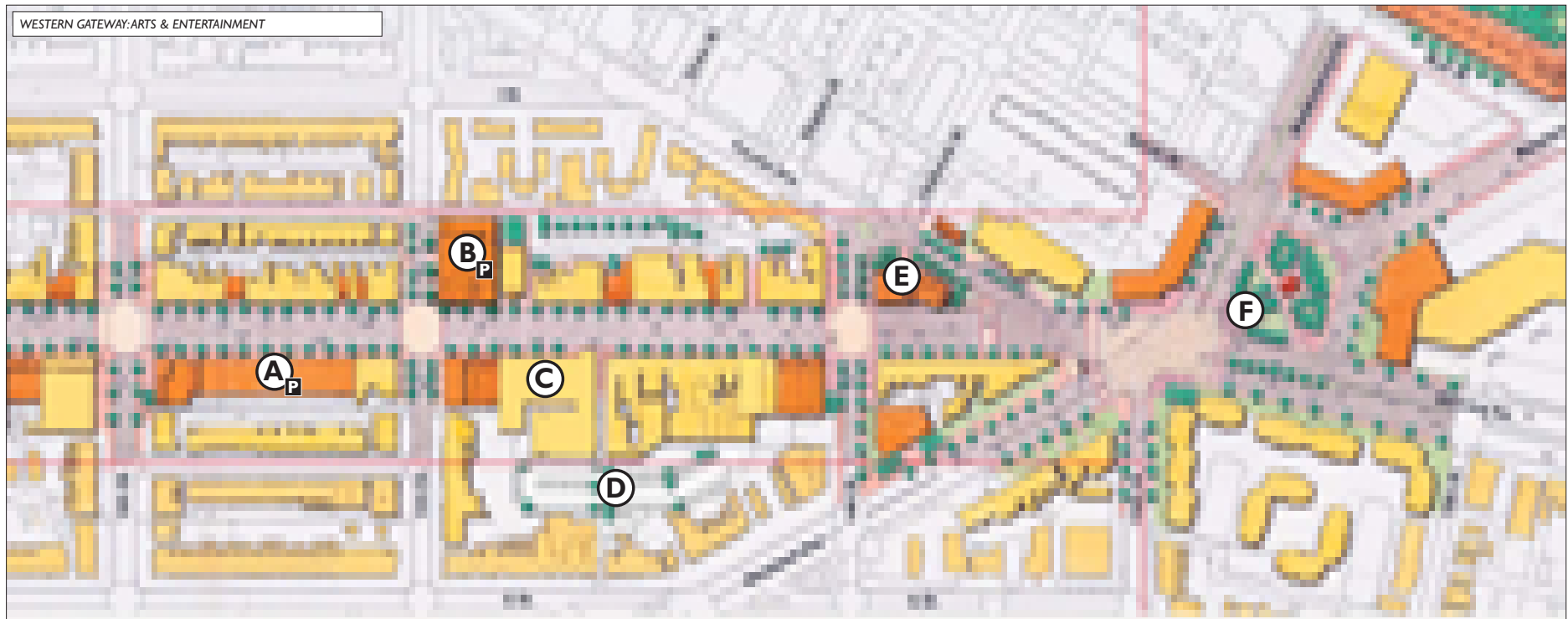
\*The estimate of new building area for the Central Retail District does not assume redevelopment of the H Street Connection.

\*\*The estimate of new building area for the Hechinger/Former Sears District assumes the Former Sears site is developed with 45,000 square feet of retail use.

### Arts & Entertainment Development Program Summary

Use	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Retail	107,496	16,319	51,220	142,397
Office/Commercial	109,942	15,271	43,270	137,941
Residential	81,902	10,246	71,085	142,741
Total (approx.)	299,000	42,000	166,000	423,000





landscaping. In the long term, the site could accommodate a new library or a mixed use development with ground floor retail and residences in upper story spaces.

*(This library site, along with the adjacent property, also was considered a candidate for a new parking structure with a first floor library. However, its size and configuration will accommodate only a very inefficient facility. Inclusion of the church property would be required for this site to better support structured parking.)*

**Rehabilitation of the Atlas Performing Arts Center and Support for Investments in the Arts (C).** The development strategy for this end of the corridor heavily depends on the success of the Atlas Performing Arts Center, H Street Playhouse, and any future arts and entertainment

uses. The success of these entities will provide at least three benefits:

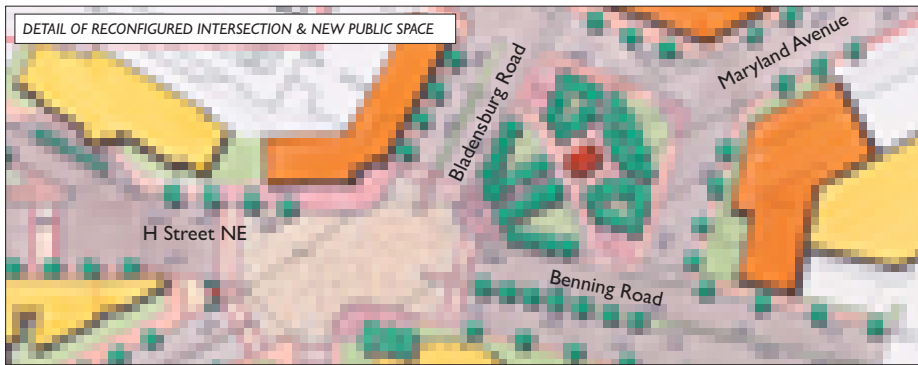
- an opportunity to restore an active arts and heritage component to the neighborhood;
- more opportunities for high quality restaurants; and
- a more active and vibrant community, especially after working hours, indirectly helping to make the street more safe.

**Mid-Block Public Parking — 1300 Block South Side (D).** As arts and entertainment venues primarily are evening destinations and most patrons will tend to drive to events rather than walk or take transit, parking is an important consideration. In addition to the proposed parking structure on the Auto Zone site and the small surface lot behind

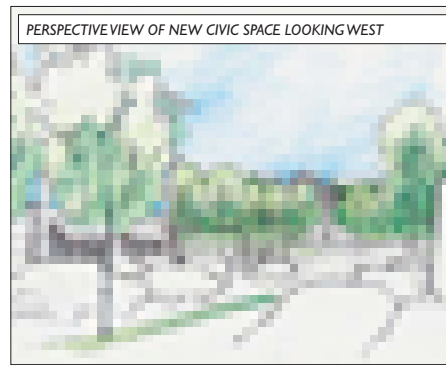
the library, the interior of the 1300 Block was analyzed as a potential site for the development of a new surface parking lot. Assuming redevelopment of all the interior parcels, the area can accommodate a 100-110 space surface lot. Should full redevelopment not be possible, a lot with fewer spaces would still provide needed space.

**Civic Space at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Florida Avenue (E).** The triangle between 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Florida and Maryland Avenues may provide an opportunity for the assembly of land and the building of a small community building. Otherwise, rehabilitation of the existing buildings is recommended.

A community building is deemed most suitable for this site given that the site location and configuration are sufficiently prominent, while permitting easy vehicular and pedestrian

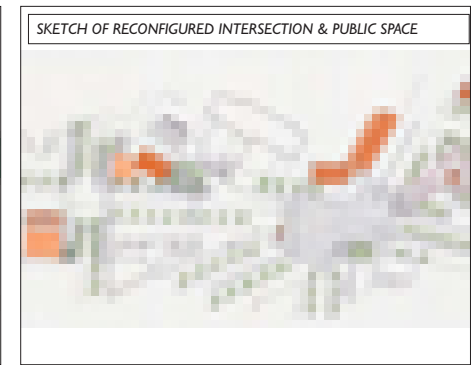


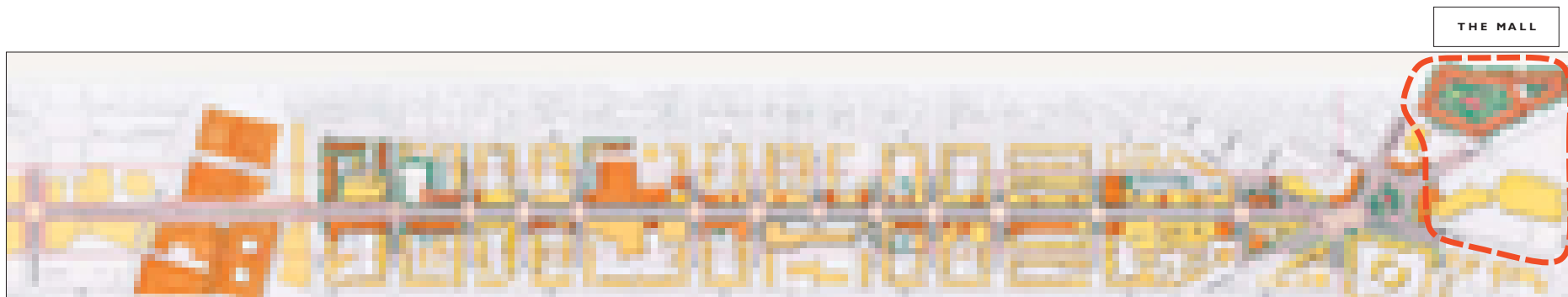
access. A suggested alternative for this site proposes that it be redeveloped as a gateway green/monument space. A larger, more prominent civic/monument gateway space is proposed for the site at the intersection of H Street, Maryland Avenue, Bladensburg Road and Benning Road; having another civic space at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Florida Avenue may be redundant and would detract from the importance of the larger gateway space.



**New Civic Space/Reconfigured Intersection**  
**— Eastern End of H Street (F).** The Plan recommends that a detailed design and traffic study be conducted for the intersection of H Street with Benning Road and Maryland, Florida, and Bladensburg Avenues. The intersection of the 6 major roadways at the eastern end of the district may be reconfigured to create a new civic space as well as improve conditions for pedestrians and drivers. The study should explore opportunities to:

- improve conditions for pedestrians with special paving, clearly marked crosswalks, and pedestrian islands offering safe havens;
- create a new public space consistent with the recommendations of NCPC's Monuments and Memorials Plan (and suggested indirectly in L'Enfant's plan for Washington, DC);
- provide for better circulation of vehicular traffic.; and
- incorporate proposed transit enhancements.





THE MALL

### The Mall: Hechinger Mall/Former Sears Sites (Bladensburg Avenue to 17<sup>th</sup> Street)

#### Overall Development Program Summary

District	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Western Gateway	688,000	83,000	458,000	1,063,000
Central Retail	303,000	81,000	178,000*	400,000
Arts & Entertainment	299,000	42,000	166,000	423,000
The Mall	214,000	0	71,000**	285,000
Total	1,504,000	206,000	873,000	2,171,000

\*The estimate of new building area for the Central Retail District does not assume redevelopment of the H Street Connection.

\*\*The estimate of new building area for the Hechinger/Former Sears District assumes the Former Sears site is developed with 45,000 square feet of retail use.

#### The Mall Development Program Summary - Option A: Large Box Retailer

Use	Existing	Building Area (sf)		Total
		Removed	New	
Retail	213,854	0	71,500	285,354
Total (approx.)	214,000	0	71,000	285,000

#### Introduction

Plans for the Hechinger Mall/Former Sears sites focus on the on-going improvement of the existing retail outlets and the attraction of new development on the former Sears site that serves neighborhood needs and complements the mix of uses on H Street. The plan supports the development of this site for either residential or commercial use so long as the design is sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood.

#### Development Program

The Plan presents three options for this district: one with the former Sears site in commercial use, a second with the site in residential use and a third with mixed uses on the site. The development programs for each option, share the following assumptions:

- Hechinger Mall (198,854 square feet) remains and is upgraded;
- CVS (15,000 square feet) remains; and
- no existing buildings are removed.

A review of each option follows:

- **Option A: Large Box Retailer.** Market research and position of the site make the potential for one, large retail box a possible scenario for the development of the former Sears site. The option plan shows an approximately 35,000 to 45,000 square feet one-story building with surface parking calculated for normative suburban retail conditions. (Introduction of a larger big box retailer of 55,000

to 80,000 square feet would require that the store be constructed on two levels [no longer considered an impossibility by national chains, but more costly to operate than conventional suburban sites and far from common in the industry] and/or that structured parking would be required to support the needed number of spaces [also a higher than usual cost, whether in an below-grade, stacked or combined configuration, when compared to suburban sites].)

- **Option B: Residential Use of Former Sears Site.**

This option for the former Sears site proposes residential medium-density development with convenience retail at the ground level. The developer has suggested that the buildings could be four stories tall with structured parking in the interior of the site. The option plan shows this as a perimeter-block multi-family design, meeting the urban demands of the important streets and offering a park (above the parking structure) on the interior.

- **Option C: Hybrid/Mixed Use on Former Sears Site.**

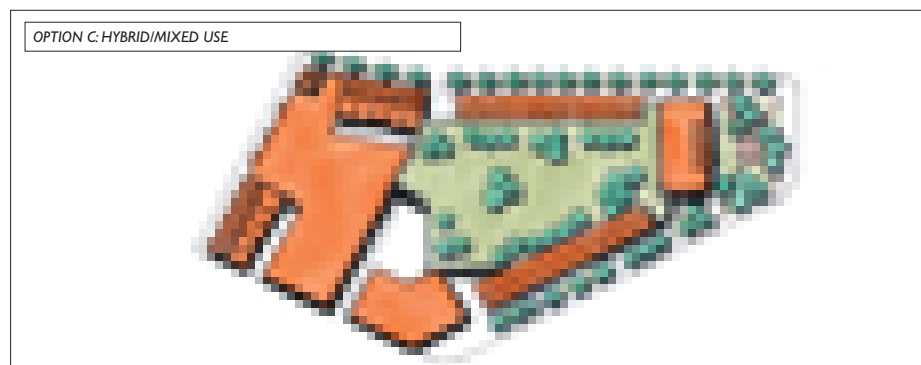
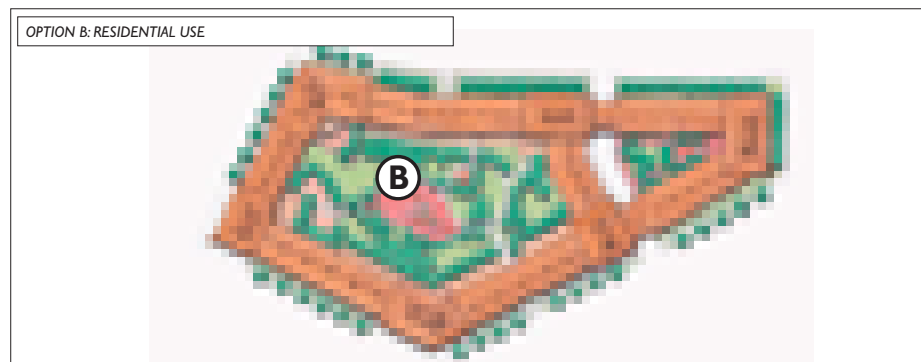
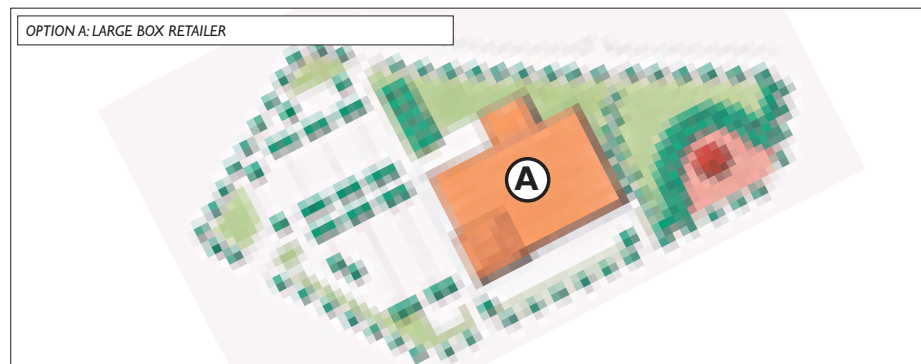
This option for the former Sears site proposes a mix of retail, office/commercial and medium-density residential uses complemented by open space areas and parking provided on site. Some 63,000 square feet of retail is provided at ground level. 60,000 square feet of the 72,000 square feet of office/commercial use is provided within a 6 story building. Some 130 residential units are distributed along the perimeter of the site in 3 to 7 story developments.

Generally, it is expected that any of these options will provide small, indirect benefits to retailers on H Street. Residential

use will result in only a small increase in demand for retail on H Street and distance to the Central Retail District are great enough to assume the project will significantly add to pedestrian traffic along the corridor.

The market impact on H Street retailers of a new 'big-box' store on the former Sears site would be indirect rather than direct. Because of the prevailing pedestrian shopper behaviors (consumers are reluctant to walk more than 1,200 to 1,500 feet as part of a shopping experience), neither site would comfortably be a 'walk-to' location from the proposed Main Street core area along the central portion of H Street. It is more likely that introduction of one or more Big Box retailers at the eastern or western ends of the corridor would help in recapturing a large share of District-based expenditures which are currently 'leaking' out of the District to these types of stores in Northern Virginia or to stores located in Prince Georges County. Recapturing these 'lost' expenditures would also increase pass through traffic along H Street as they would generate what the retail industry calls 'inflow', defined as a retail use that is a strong enough destination that customers will seek it/them out and are willing to travel further than the distance that the more proximate markets (motivated by convenience) would be willing to go.

These recovered sales, largely from District of Columbia residents from Capitol Hill and other neighborhoods in NE and NW Washington, would attract more people



The Mall Development Program Summary - Option B: Residential Use

Use	Building Area (sf)			
	Existing	Removed	New	Total
Retail	213,854	0	36,146	250,000
Residential	0	0	250,000	250,000
Total (approx.)	214,000	0	286,000	500,000

The Mall Development Program Summary - Option C: Hybrid/Mixed Use

Use	Building Area (sf)			
	Existing	Removed	New	Total
Retail	213,854	0	63,400	277,254
Office/Commercial	0	0	72,000	72,000
Residential	0	0	134,000	134,000
Total (approx.)	214,000	0	269,000	483,000

driving to the destination Big Box stores along the H Street corridor; increasing the level of exposure for locally owned and Mom-and-Pop businesses located in the more pedestrian-oriented central portion of H Street. While it may be argued that destination retailers may not generate sales in specialty shops and restaurants on the same trip as their Big Box visit, the exposure could foster another shopping trip later as more and more customers become familiar with the H Street corridor. Therefore, the benefits of introducing/recruiting Big Box retailers to H Street is less direct, but would build customer traffic from other parts of the area which would be less likely to come to H Street at all without the Big Box destinations.

#### **Recommendations**

**Option A: Large Box Retailer (A).** Should the site be designated for retail use, care must be taken to ensure neighborhood impact is minimized. Specific site and building design recommendations for the property are included in the design guidelines.

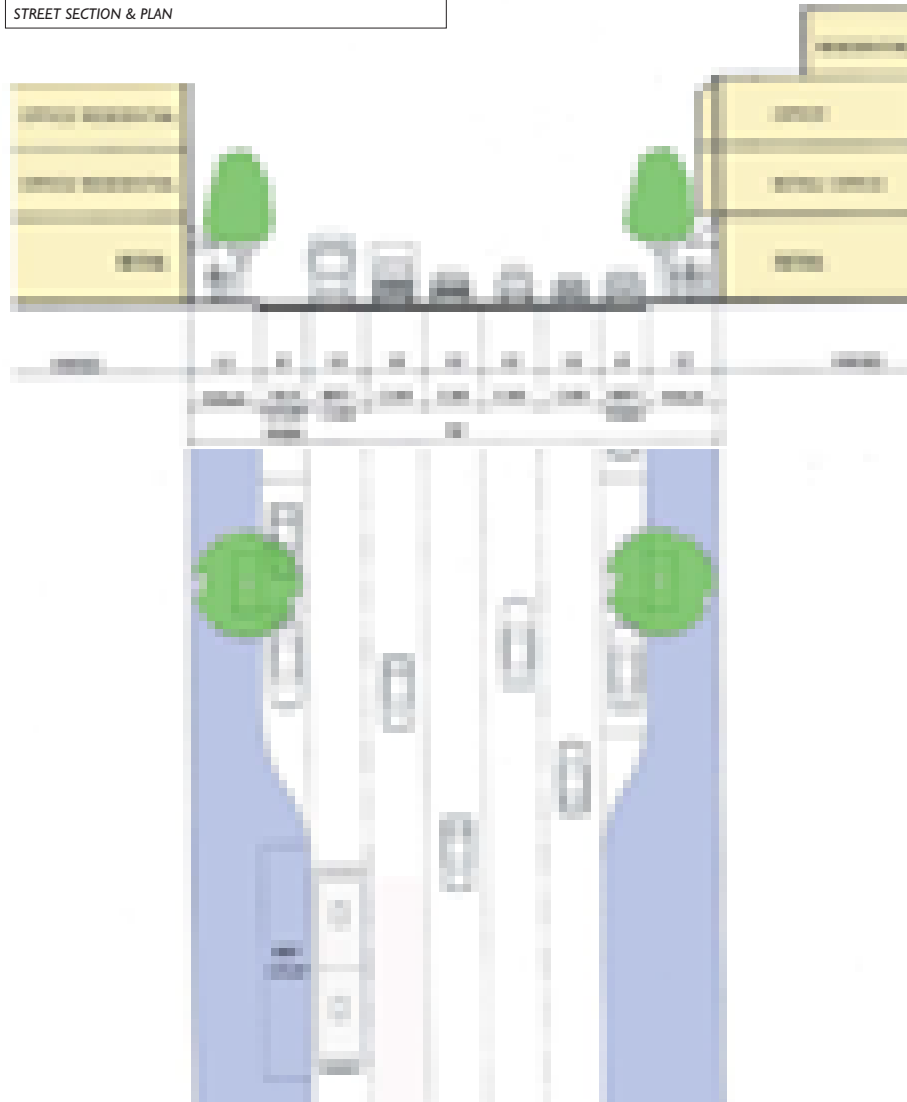
**Option B: Residential Use (B).** Should the site be designated for residential use, the project should follow an urban form of development, with the buildings pulled to the street, mid-block parking, and direct access to individual units from the street. Specific site and building design recommendations for the property are included in the design guidelines.

**Option C: Hybrid/Mixed Use (C).** Should the site be designated for mixed use, as with Option B, the project should follow an urban form of development, with the buildings pulled to the street, mid-block parking, and direct access to individual units from the street.

**Streetscape Improvements.** From an urban perspective, the building could be considered a contributor to the public realm if it provides at least two sides of active storefronts and presents a quality building elevation to the principal streets.

**Long Term Infill.** At each of the corners of the intersection, building forms are proposed to help give shape to the space. Currently devoid of assigned program, the buildings could be a long term planning consideration that helps define the area as a gateway to the Corridor.

## STREET SECTION & PLAN



## 8.3 Corridor-Wide Transportation Improvements

### Transit Way Concept

The Plan calls for H Street to serve as primarily a transit and pedestrian way with accommodations for vehicular traffic and on-street parking. While the particular form of transit has yet to be decided—Light Rail Transit (LRT), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and street car options are currently under consideration—enough is known to offer recommendations regarding the allocation of uses in the existing 90' right-of-way.

Recommendations of the use of the right-of-way call for the following:

- 11' sidewalk widths on both sides of the right-of-way;
- 8' parking lane on both sides of the right-of-way with bulb-outs at each intersection to provide transit loading areas and reduce pedestrian crossing distances at intersections;
- 11' transit lanes on both sides of the right-of-way used exclusively for transit during rush hour and perhaps shared with other vehicles during non-rush hour. (These transit lanes could be shared by fixed rail transit serving predetermined station locations and buses serving each intersection);
- three 10' vehicular lanes which would allow for two lanes in the rush hour priority direction, and one counterflow lane in the center.

(The non-preferred street section alternatives are described in Appendix C.)

### Public Parking

Future planning should recognize the important roles transit and walking play in supporting the corridor's viability as a neighborhood commercial district. As an urban neighborhood, commercial uses rely on foot traffic both from the immediate neighborhood and arriving from transit. The existing strong bus network supports this theory and the Plan expects to see increases in transit reliance with the suggested improvements. Increased intensity of uses on the corridor will be supported by improved transit.

**Full-Time Curb Parking.** On-street parking should be permitted at all times along the corridor. The current peak-hour restriction negatively impacts parking availability reducing retail opportunities and lending to the negative perception of the corridor. Curbside parking improves the pedestrian environment and helps changes the image of H Street from a freeway to that of a neighborhood that is open for business. The street section that the plan recommends generally

maintains the number of travel lanes along the corridor (except in the peak hours). But by reducing the width of lanes, parking lanes can be maintained. The street parking in front of the stores will encourage the use of the commercial by commuters as well as neighbors. People will be more likely to stop if they perceive that parking is convenient, and if slower moving traffic allows them to see the stores they are currently speeding past.

**Increase Off-Street Parking.** Convenient short-term street parking is only a part of the solution. Street parking must be supplemented with convenient off-street parking since the street cannot provide enough spaces to meet the parking demand. Off-street parking must be easy to access, distributed to be convenient to all the commercial, and must be safe. The plan for providing off-street parking is a combination of short-term versus long-term initiatives and surface versus structured parking opportunities.

In the short-term surface parking options need to be pursued. Vacant land such as the property behind the library can be paved and used as public parking. Mid-block locations that would not require removal of the H Street frontage buildings should be considered as public parking facilities. For instance, the Plan has identified the alley behind the Atlas as a potential surface parking location. In addition, existing parking lots that are currently unused, such as the fenced parking lot behind Murry's, and/or underutilized lots that are reserved for single users should be made available to retail customers. Church parking lots are a good example of underutilized lots. There are several located within a block of the retail corridor that are restricted by signage or fencing. Agreements should be reached to allow for the weekday use of these lots when the church is not using them. Both the business community and the church would gain. Any liability concerns can be overcome with creative thinking by a good liability insurance agent.

New surface parking lots should be controlled by signage or metering to restrict the spaces to short term use so they are available to retail customers, not taken up the entire day by employees or residents. Readily available short-term spaces available to customers will lessen the need to customers to seek parking on the residential streets in the neighborhood.

In the longer term the District should look for public parking opportunities in every redevelopment proposal that comes up in the commercial portions of the corridor. Introducing parking districts may encourage people to park once and for all and walk to all their destinations, as has been done in other

cities. In San Francisco, for example, centralized valet parking is provided in local business districts where the restaurants share in the responsibility for providing that service.

Sites which are large enough to support parking structures on the corridor; are hard to find. When properties are consolidated those sites should provide publicly accessible parking to help to support surrounding businesses as well.

The plan has identified three potential redevelopment locations with the potential for future parking structures; the Murry's site, the Auto Zone, and H Street Connection. Each of these sites should provide second story parking structures with ground level retail to activate the street. The sites are well located to serve the concentrations of retail activities and

are easily accessible by car and foot.

It is not unusual for a city to shoulder some of the burden of providing parking garages such as those suggested by the Plan. It is difficult for urban neighborhood retail areas such as this to provide adequate parking due to cost, small lot sizes and neighborhood preservation. The additional cost of parking can make it difficult for urban retail areas to compete with their suburban counterparts. Therefore, the District should consider the construction of parking structures through the parking authority held by NCRC as public projects or private/public partnerships. Local examples of such initiatives include the new parking garage in Adams Morgan, or the parking districts used in Bethesda and Silver Spring, Maryland.

